

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

After entry of the foregoing amendment, Claims 1-5 and 7-22 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 4, 7, 9-11, 14-17, 19, 21, and 22 are amended; and Claim 6 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1 and 11 were objected to; Claim 6 was objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.75(c); Claims 4, 7, 10, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph; Claims 1-6, 8-13, and 21-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,172,700 to Obata in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,266,077 to Kamimura; Claims 7 and 16-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Obata in view of Kamimura, as applied to Claim 11 above, and further in view of Japanese Patent No. 8-118722 to Sawada; and Claims 14-15 and 20 were indicated as allowable.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter.

Regarding the objections to Claims 1, 6, and 11, those claims are amended in view of the Examiner's comments. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the objections to those claims be withdrawn.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 4, 7, 10, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, those claims are amended in view of the Examiner's comments. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of those claims under U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

Addressing now the rejection of Claims 1-5, 7-13, 16-19, 21, and 22, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over the combination of Obata and Kamimura, those rejections are respectfully traversed.

Amended Claim 1 is directed to an optical writing unit. The writing unit includes:

a light emitting device array comprising a plurality of light emitting device array chips, each of the light emitting device array chips comprising a plurality of light emitting devices that are arranged at a predetermined interval P; and

an image forming device array comprising a plurality of image forming devices,

wherein *light volume of the light emitting devices is set up such that a predefined property value concerning an exposure intensity distribution for each of the light emitting devices falls within a predetermined range*, the predetermined range being defined for an effective image area, and

the light volume of the light emitting devices that are located on and near an edge of the light emitting device array chip can be set differently from other light emitting devices. [emphasis added]

Independent Claims 9-11, 21, and 22 similarly recite a light volume of light emitting devices that is set such that a property value concerning an exposure intensity distribution for each of the light emitting devices falls within a predetermined range defined for an effective image area. The remaining pending claims depend directly or indirectly on Claims 9-11, 21, and 22.

The outstanding Office Action cites Obata in view of Kamimura as teaching the claimed invention; and cites only Kamimura as teaching the feature of setting a light volume of the light emitting devices.

First, Applicant notes Kamimura does not teach the feature of a light volume of light emitting devices that is set such that a property value concerning an exposure intensity distribution for each of the light emitting devices falls within a predetermined range defined for an effective image area. Rather, Kamimura teaches a method of adjusting LEDs to within 16% of the average optical power of those LEDs.¹ The average optical power of the LEDs is not a property value concerning an exposure intensity distribution of the LEDs. Accordingly, as the teachings of Obata in view in Kamimura do not teach every limitation of the claimed

¹ Kamimura, col. 3, lines 43 – col. 5, line 30.

invention, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Obata and Kamimura be withdrawn.

Second, Applicant notes that the Action cites no motivation, either within the text of the combined teachings or the general knowledge of those skilled in the art, to modify Obata in view of Kamimura.² As “the initial burden is on the Examiner to provide some suggestion of the desirability of the proposed modification”,³ Applicants respectfully request that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Obata and Kamimura be withdrawn.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 7 and 16-20, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Obata and Kamimura in view of Sawada, Applicants respectfully submit that Sawada does not cure the above-noted deficiencies of Obata and Kamimura. More particularly, Sawada does not teach the feature of light volume of light emitting devices set such that a property value concerning an exposure intensity distribution falls within a predetermined range. Rather, as noted by the Office Action, Sawada teaches increasing or decreasing a driving current in accord with the magnitude of the intervals between LED chips and their respective LEDs.

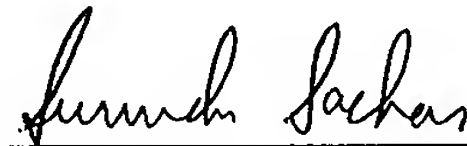
² See Office Action, 7/8/2004, page 6, para 3.

³ See MPEP 2142.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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